

Washington, DC -- As his second example of Why Washington is Broken, Congressman Buchanan cites a Wall Street Journal editorial about how Democrats in Congress continue record deficit spending while promising to “get a handle on balancing the budget” and claims that they are “making real efforts to do it.” The editorial notes that despite a historic \$1.4 trillion deficit “the spending machine rolls on, all but guaranteeing monumental future tax increases. “

Here is the full opinion piece as it appeared in the Wall Street Journal:

“The Spending Rolls On” (The Wall Street Journal Editorial Board)

The White House disclosed the other day that the fiscal 2009 budget deficit clocked in at \$1.4 trillion, amid the usual promises to do something about it. Yet even as budget director Peter Orszag was speaking, House Democrats were moving on a dozen spending bills for fiscal 2010 that total 12.1% in more domestic discretionary increases.

Yes, 12.1%.

Remember, inflation is running close to zero, or 0.8%. The good news, if we can call it that, is that Senate Democrats only want to increase nondefense appropriations by 8% for 2010. Because these funding increases become part of the permanent baseline for future appropriations, the 2010 House budget bills would permanently raise annual outlays for discretionary programs by about \$75 billion a year from now until, well, forever.

These spending hikes do not include the so-called mandatory spending programs like Medicare and Medicaid, which exploded by 9.8% and 24.7%, respectively, in the just-ended 2009 fiscal year. All of this largesse is also on top of the stimulus funding that agencies received in 2009. The budget for the Environmental Protection Agency rose 126%, the Department of Education budget 209% and energy programs 146%.

House Republicans on the Budget Committee added up the 2009 appropriations, the stimulus funding and 2010 budgets and found that federal agencies will, on average, receive a 57% increase in appropriated funds from 2008-2010. By contrast, real family incomes fell by 3.6% last year. There's no recession in Washington.

More broadly, the White House and the 111th Congress have already enacted or proposed \$3.4 trillion of new spending through 2019 for things like the health-care plan, cap and tax, and the children's health bill passed earlier this year. Very little of this has been financed with offsetting spending cuts elsewhere in the budget.

Throughout the era of Republican rule in Washington, we scored GOP lawmakers for their overspending and earmarks—and so did Nancy Pelosi and other Congressional Democrats. So how do their records compare? From 2001-2008 the average annual increase in appropriations bills came in at 6.4%—or about double the rate of inflation. In this Congress spending is now growing six times faster than inflation.

And here is the kicker. Mr. Obama's 10-year budget forecast predicts that the budget deficit will

fall in future years in part because federal spending on discretionary programs will grow at less than the rate of inflation. But spending is already up nearly 8% (including defense) in the first year alone.

For a laugh-out-loud moment on all of this, we recommend yesterday's performance by New York Senator Chuck Schumer on NBC's "Meet the Press." Mr. Schumer declared that "Barack Obama and we Democrats—this is counterintuitive but true—are really trying to get a handle on balancing the budget and we're making real efforts to do it." Counterintuitive? He said this four days after Senate Democrats lost a vote to add \$250 billion to the deficit for doctor payments without any compensating spending cuts.

Democrats must figure that they can get away with this sort of rap because no one will call them on the reality of what they're spending. And they're probably right about a press corps that has ignored the spending boom since Democrats took over Congress in 2006. Meanwhile, the spending machine rolls on, all but guaranteeing monumental future tax increases.